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to make the best of it; since it is a circle from which no human thought can ever escape.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*La Philosophie moderne depuis Bacon jusqu'à Leibniz: Études historiques.* GASTON SORTAIS. Paris: Lethielleux. 1920. Pp. x + 592.

At once ambitious and valuable is the series of works which Father Sortais is undertaking in these studies of the history of modern philosophy. If succeeding volumes are comparable to this first one in the series in fullness and explicitness of treatment, we shall have in the series a veritable encyclopaedia of seventeenth century philosophic thought—the century, of course, which created the atmosphere and formulated the problems of that epoch which is called “modern philosophy.”

The first hundred pages of the near six hundred forming the volume are devoted to certain sixteenth century precursors of Francis Bacon who were concerned with questions of method and authority—Pierre Ramus, François Sanchez, Giacomo Acontio, Everard Digby, William Temple, Nicholas Hemmingsen—men who were feeling, in various lines, after philosophic and scientific methods which could lead them away from the sterile scholasticism of the period to a more natural and direct investigation of nature, and whose speculative work constitutes an interesting parallel to the series of scientific achievements which began with the theories of Copernicus. With this preparation Father Sortais goes forward to a study of the topic of his Livre I, which is *l'Empirisme en Angleterre et en France*, devoting the remainder of the present volume to a study of the life, work, and influence of Francis Bacon. As outlined in his general plan, this is to be followed by other books devoted to *Réactions que provoqua cette poussée empirique; Déisme; the Philosophie du Droit; the Révolution Cartésienne; Cartésianisme en France; Cartésianisme à l'étranger; and finally, the Systèmes plus ou moins opposés au Cartésianisme: Philosophie scolastique, Scepticisme, Panthéisme de Spinoza, Sensualisme de Locke, Dynamisme de Leibniz.* This is at once an heroic and a fascinating programme, in its very statement suggesting the dramatic turn which the author sees in the speculative effort of the century: first the thralldom of empirical and mathematical method, later the uneasy struggle of the mind to free itself from the too exclusive yoke of these

powerful instruments and to discover truths to which they might lead but which they could not contain.

The method of the author is itself an interesting commentary upon his subject matter. The contents are organized as only could be by a man trained in scholastic method, with all formal explicitness; but the work itself is largely in the nature of a running exposition of copious reader's notes, the exposition following the materials with honest fidelity. Taken in connection with the full and careful notes, sources and passages, this gives an encyclopaedic value to the work which certainly assures its long usefulness. There are, too, many paragraphs of appraisement and summary which make the structure of the thought and the opinions of the author at once evident, frank even in their perfectly legitimate bias.

Virtually the volume before us is a monograph on Francis Bacon, giving first an account of his life and the motives actuating the composition of his works; second, an exposition of the Baconian classification of knowledge, which is rightly stressed as the very heart of Bacon's contribution; and lastly, a critical examination of the philosophy and influence of the great empiricist. Full bibliography, index, and analytic and synthetic tables of contents make the book a most workable reference.

Of the general aim of the work of Father Sortais not too much can be said in praise. Few students of the history of thought at this hour will doubt that the European development has reached one of the nodes of its changing course and that in a distinct and dramatic sense a period has come to its close. It is time that we should set about writing the story of this period—for it has never yet been done, and in particular not for the nations and years in which it received its essential color, that is, England and France in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. The author is beginning his work in the just locus, in time and space, and is treating his affair with an expansiveness proportionate to its importance. On the other hand, not he himself pretends that what he is giving is more than a study in materials. He justly observes that the perspective must grow out of the slow analysis of the works of men in relation to their times, and his volumes will, in a sense, be propaedeutic to the vivid characterization of the thought of the Northern Renaissance (for Bacon to Bergson comprise this) which some future day will give.

Meantime for the picture of Bacon himself we may be thoroughly appreciative. The influence of his classification of knowledge has been very much greater than books have recognized, affecting the whole encyclopaedic and educational, and hence investigative programme of modern times: our reference books, catalogues and cur-

ricula are all essentially Baconian, and it may well be doubted if the influence of the philosopher in this field of organization is not truly speaking of far greater significance than his popularization of the inductive method. We say "popularization" with intent, for it is far less to Francis than to Roger Bacon that its emphatic discovery is due. Indeed, it is the most striking weakness of Father Sortais's book that he suggests no relationship of the thought of the two great Englishmen. The recent readings of the cipher manuscript of Roger Bacon by Professor Newbold are throwing an amazing light upon the discoveries of the latter. Further studies of the history of the manuscripts of Friar Bacon bid fair to establish beyond cavil the continuity of the Roger Bacon tradition down to Elizabethan times and in the very circles in which Francis Bacon moved. It may, indeed, turn out that the Jacobean chancellor of the seventeenth is but the perpetuated tongue—like the traditional head of speaking bronze—of the half-heretical Oxford prisoner of the thirteenth century. Of all this Father Sortais appears to know not even what should have been guessed apart from the manuscript discoveries, and the lack is likely to call for a rewriting of his chapters at some not distant date. And a knowledge of the strange twinship of the two Bacons may go far yet to explain that curious duality of Francis Bacon's character which Father Sortais (apologist for the chancellor as he often is), along with others, finds therein. For we can not quarrel with his final picture: "The physiognomy of Bacon, author of the *Novum Organum* and chancellor of England, unconquerably evokes the antique image of *Janus bifrons*. Hence, even with all indulgence, History, that it may remain impartial, can only with reservation bestow upon him the eulogy of greatness, for moral grandeur, which naught else may supply, was wanting in him."

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## JOURNALS AND NEW BOOKS

SCIENTIA. July, 1921. *National Contributions to Geology* (pp. 1-12): J. W. GREGORY (Glasgow).—Rapid survey of the history of geology, bringing out its cosmopolitan character. *La constitution de l'individualité. II. L'individualité psychique* (pp. 13-24): AUGUSTO PI SUÑER (Barcelona).—A recommendation of behaviorist psychology. *Les idées nouvelles sur la suggestion* (pp. 25-32): C. BAUDOUIN (Geneva).—Suggestion, fallen into disrepute, has again been rehabilitated by M. Émile Coné and his disciples, forming the